"I know of no natural objection; but what man of sense or company of men would lay out their money in making preparations in Sheffield, so infected with trade-unions."

The dissatisfaction of the essayist, however, with the present state of things in Sheffield, does not rest here. He exposes what he conceives to be those technical and professional causes which have tended to blast the good fame of Sheffield wares in general. These, virtually, he may be said to comprehend under the head of haste and carelessness in the production of worthless quantity, in place of care and labour in the manufacture of sterling quality. "Softness of temper is the general complaint of Sheffield wares." If hardened to a sufficient extent, in the haste and carelessness of manufacture, the goods are destroyed by wholesale. The grinder, moreover, "I have seen ram dozens into the wheel-fire, and heat them red-hot, in order to dispatch his work more quickly;" otherwise, he either destroys or returns them to the manufacturer to soften them. Haste, too, in the manufacture of steel he deprecates, recommending strongly the preparation of cast steel by the manufacturers under their own eye. "As to cast-steel," he says, "few are aware why it is so uniform in temperature; it is from being melted, which mixes the high and the low conversions, the outside and the inside, in the crucible."

On the whole, the essayist's hope for Sheffield is by no means cheering. His concluding words, which do not very clearly express his meaning, are, "That the Sheffield trade may revive and progress is the fear, but still the fervent wish of the writer." He takes care to remark, however, that if he were now a young man, about to enter into the business, he would steer clear of Sheffield by a hundred miles.

NOTES IN THE PROVINCES.

PLANS for a new church at Birch, near Colchester, have been prepared by Mr. S. S. Teulon, architect. The style is Gothic, and the building is to have flint facings and Caen stone rusticated coins, a tower and spire: sittings, 600.——The sum of 3,000*l.* is to be at length borrowed, on church-rate security, for the repair and re-opening of Aylesbury Church.——The Grimsby dock area reclaimed is 132 acres, length of dam and embankment, 6,500 feet, with projection into river beyond high water 2,900 feet; head of water against the dam at spring tides, 25 feet.——It is proposed to erect a monument to Cromwell on the site of Slepe Hall, St. Ives, where he resided at the opening of his public career.——Trinity Congregational Chapel, Queen's-road, Reading, lately opened, is in the Early English style, with a turret and pinnacle at each of the four angles, and a triplet window and slightly projecting porch at the end facing Queen's-road. Swindon stone with Bath stone dressings have been used in its construction. The exterior presents carved corbels and finials, gable and dripstone terminations, &c., so far ornamental, but there is no 'superfluous decoration.' The roof, interiorly, is of simple construction, and the principals rest on stone corbels of carved foliage. There is a gallery of timber across the northern end. The benches are all open and low backed, with *fleur de lis* terminations. The woodwork in general is of deal, stained and varnished. Mr. W. F. Poulton, of Reading, was the architect, and the contractors were Messrs. Cooper and Sons, of Maidenhead; sub-contractors, Mr. Darter, painter, and Messrs. Wheeler for masonry and carving.——The consternation and distress, says a contemporary, occasioned among the working mechanics and labourers in Plymouth-yard, as the details of the Government plan of reduction become developed, is extreme. Many who have been doing duty as leading hands over hired mechanics for years, themselves having been previously entered on the dockyard establishment, and supposing themselves on that account secure from discharge, are to be summarily turned adrift at the close of the financial year; the only alternative being the bitter one of taking the berth and pay (12*s.* a-week) of a labourer, and this considered a favour.——A baptismal font has just been added to the Holy Cross Church, Pershore. It was executed by Messrs. Gibbs and Son, Oxford, and cost 30*l.*, raised by the curate.——The roof of Holy Rhood Church, Southampton, is now covered in, the galleries are in progress, and the interior masonry is almost finished.——Columpton Church is to be almost entirely reseated and repaved, and the gallery obscuring the fan tracery vaulting of Lane's chapel removed, and the nave gallery reduced. A chancel, as our readers are probably aware, was recently built.——The new church at Yardley Wood, near Birmingham, lately consecrated, comprises a nave, aisles, and chancel, with short transepts, and a bell tower.——The opening of the Manchester New Exchange, in May, is to be celebrated by a public ball, substantially for the benefit of the baths and wash-houses there——The Newcastle baths and wash-houses seem to be in busy use, not only by the class for whom they were designed, but by 'the public' generally, and those truly industrious classes of the community, the maids of all work and the professional washerwomen, are getting fast initiated into all the mysteries of hot-air closets and steam-boilers, thus, as the *Gateshead Observer* remarks, at once saving their employers' houses from damp and discomfort and their tempers from still worse evils.——Three ornamental windows have been executed and put up by Mr. J. Gibson, of Newcastle, in the church at Walker.——A subscription has been opened to purchase the late Mr. David Scott's painting, "Vasco de Gama, the discoverer of the passage to India, doubling the Cape of Good Hope," to be placed in the hall of the Trinity House at Leith. Why do not corporations and other bodies purchase some of the large pictures now spoiling in artists' studios *before* the painter dies?

RAILWAY JOTTINGS.

SIR F. HEAD, in his 'Stokers and Pokers,' states that 10,000,000*l.* were expended in Parliamentary inquiries and Parliamentary contests in 1845, 1846, and 1847, and that that money "would, at the rate of 20,000*l.* per mile, have constructed a national railway 500 miles in length—say from London to Aberdeen."——The cost of advertising one railway scheme in the London morning papers alone is said to have been 2,500*l.*——The Great Western Company, says the *Liverpool Times*, "have effected a saving of 15*s.* per annum by wafering instead of sealing their letters. What an anomaly! their income is increased by *waxing less*." If the waferer, however, get no more a-week than the saving per annum, he will be apt to reduce the profit by eating the wafers—a circumstance which ought to be taken into consideration—though he will not wax so fat, we fear, even in such a way of faring, as to justify any further reduction of wages.——Two hundred more of the workmen on this line, besides clerks, it is said, are to be discharged on 1st May—not a very bright summer's morning to them, poor fellows.——"At length," says Herepath, "the Government has determined to try whether the Great Western Railway Company of Common Carriers are to be amenable to the laws of the land or not; whether they shall be compelled, like other Companies and individuals, to obey the Acts of Parliament granted on their own solicitation, or shall treat them as waste paper. It will be remembered that, some time ago, the case for the reduction of the Great Western fares was laid before the Attorney and Solicitor General, and that they gave their opinion that the Great Western ought, under their Act, to reduce their fares and charges. The Great Western have neglected to do so, and therefore the Crown has ordered a bill to be filed in Chancery against them to compel them."——The Copenhagen tunnel on the Great Northern is about to be let. This tunnel is about 600 yards in length: it commences at the end of Mr. Brassey's contract, towards, or rather into London. The short length, about three-quarters of a mile, between the Copenhagen tunnel and King's Cross station, has already been contracted for, so that the Copenhagen tunnel will, when let, leave the line immediately into London completely contracted for. The only work which will then remain to be disposed of at the London end, will be the King's Cross station.——A railway bridge at Stowe, near the Marton-road station, has lately given way it is said.——The *American Railway Journal* states that no fewer than 6,421 miles of railway were in actual operation within the limits of the United States at the commencement of the present year. These railways, including plant, have cost on an average about 30,000 dollars, or 6,000*l.* per mile. Of course they are not on the same scale of magnificence as the lines of this country. In Canada very few miles of railway have as yet been constructed.

ELECTRO-TELEGRAPHIC PROGRESS.

WE understand, says a contemporary, that a proposition will shortly be brought before the public, having for its object such an extension of the facilities of electro-intercommunication, as to bring its use within the means of the million. It must be something extremely urgent which induces the capitalist to pay about 7*s.* per 100 miles for twenty words, when he can get a long detailed letter in five or six hours for one penny. The system in America has been established on thousands of miles of railway, on the principle of enabling the public generally to partake of its advantages; and a company in this country, on the same principle, charging about 6*d.* or 1*s.* per message, would soon find the decrease in price produce an enormous extent of business, and make the undertaking exceedingly popular. Increased means of never-failing power, unquestionable secrecy, and great reduction in charges, are recommendations that cannot fail to prove highly attractive to capitalist, merchant, and trader.——One of the most remarkable features in connection with the transmission of President Taylor's curtailed "message," by telegraph, from Liverpool to London, was the expense. It occupied about ninety-eight lines; and the sum paid by Willmer and Smith to the Electric Telegraph Company was 21*l.* sterling. The same thing would have been done in America for as many dollars. How, says the *European Times*, can the English press, under its already heavy expenditure, endure pecuniary inflictions of this nature?——The wires of the telegraph working along the South-Western have been brought round from Fareham to the terminus at Landport, Portsmouth, and thence carried across the fortifications. The Admiralty are to communicate by cyphers, with, of course, a secret key. The old semaphore stations, however, are not to be given up, and a new one for Osborne is talked of.

METROPOLITAN COMMISSION OF SEWERS.

A GENERAL court was held on Thursday, at the Court-house, Greek-street, Soho-square; the Right Hon. the Earl of Carlisle in the chair.

The Drainage of Kensington.—A plan for the effectual drainage of the town and workhouse of Kensington, was presented by Messrs. Austin, Phillips, Gotto, and Lovick, pursuant to an order of the last court. They recommended that an 18-inch pipe sewer should be laid down to communicate with the Counters' Creek Sewer, at an estimated cost of 790*l.*, towards which Mr. Bird, the builder, was willing to contribute 300*l.*

Mr. Leslie expressed his approbation generally of the line proposed, but believed that it might be still further improved by passing it through a field on which 200 houses were about to be erected (the plan of which he produced), a straight line would be formed, and with a considerable saving of expense. He would, however, for the pipe sewer proposed, lay down a substantial brickwork egg-shaped sewer, which, by being submitted to public competition, might be executed at 10*s.* per foot. By the adoption of his plan, a permanent remedy would be found for every complaint at Kensington, at an expense not exceeding 1,200*l.*, a large proportion of which would be contributed by the owners of the adjoining property.

Mr. Austin, the consulting engineer, said the Counters' Creek Sewer was a most offensive ditch, and, for the sake of improvement, it was desirable to divert the sewage from it altogether. Taking a general view of the drainage area, therefore, he was not prepared to recommend any drainage into it as a permanent work.—Mr. Chadwick objected to commissioners having a local knowledge of particular districts submitting their views for the drainage of them without proper plans, as what might be proper for a single place might turn out

To learn how to use PDF Compression and OCR go to our website